

"I DON'T WANT TO GO THERE" HOW TO TALK TO NAYSAYERS, DEFEATISTS, AND NEOLIBERAL MISANTHROPIES ABT THE POLICE

I'm sure you've heard the stats—cops murder black citizens at 2.5x the rate as white citizens, even though black people make up only 19% of the US population. Police shoot an estimated 3,000 citizens, killing ~1,000, every year—do you want a murderer protecting you from potential harm? Look, the NYPD operating budget is currently 5.6 billion dollars. We're amidst a global pandemic and economic disaster, so funding for education, healthcare, and social services, the exact things we need right now, are on the chopping block. How can we afford NOT to

DEFUND
THE
POLICE.

True! All-or-nothing thinking undermines the complexity of humans and the situation. Still, if you choose to participate in a racist system built on colonial, militaristic principles¹, you are, by definition, complicit. It's easy to feel powerless, but we can find some power through what we choose to be a part of.



WE'RE TOO FAR INTO THE SYSTEM

Protesters are going after a symptom, it won't solve the root cause.² It's true, the system is fucked. Let's take a brief look: our contemporary policing derives from and perpetuates our history as a country built on slavery. Many police forces were started to enforce antebellum slave labor—inventing and prosecuting crimes became an incentive to keep black people in chains and on the clock. Paramilitary training, zero tolerance laws, racial profiling, and three strikes laws compounded this surveilled, terrorized state into the world we live in today.³ Ex, in the aftermath of 9/11, the NYPD formed a "Demographics Unit" to racially profile and track Muslim Americans. As of 2016, the American Public Health Association named law enforcement violence as a public health issue. If the system is the problem, then we need a new system. It's that simple.

Would you keep a buggy computer operating system around? To say we've come too far misses life-saving opportunities for imagining a future in which we all live free of the patterns that oppress us. Instead of saying it's hopeless, try imagining a hopeful future where police are defunded and replaced with holistic forms of community care and safety (i.e. crisis centers, job programs, restorative justice, education, housing, recovery centers, and affordable healthcare for all).

Imagining such a world is the first step toward dismantling our broken and heart-breaking structures. Then we can figure the logistics out together.

And, even if a police officer is fired for misconduct they are often rehired or receive a hefty pension (which comes from your taxes and accounts for a major portion of their bloated budgets). So the bad apple has just been returned to the bunch and now you have a mold infestation on your hands. It's time to throw out this rotten food and get some fresh fruit.

in the US can take only 21 weeks⁴, in NYC it's six months⁵—compared to three years in Norway where cops have killed four people since 2002.

First of all, who's hiring all these apples?

Secondly, the rest of that idiom goes: "A few

BUT WE CAN'T
BLAME
EVERYONE
FOR THE
BAD APPLES OF A
FEW

bad apples spoils the whole bunch. "Basic training

References:
1. Alex Vitale, The End of Policing
2. Tony Tolman/Hutte
3. Yassmin Serhan, What the World Could Teach America About Policing
4. Critical Resistance
5. Adrienne Maree Brown, Emergent Strategies and Pleasure Activism